

# adoptionuk

for every adoptive family

working with

**PAC-UK** THE AGENCY FOR  
**ADOPTION &  
PERMANENCY  
SUPPORT**

Can be funded by the Adoption Support Fund in England

**Based on our renowned Parenting our Children programme**

**Parenting our Teens** is broadly based on our well-known **Parenting our Children** programme, which was developed for Adoption UK by Family Futures and includes new elements that specifically address the issues faced by parents with teens who have experienced trauma in their early life.



# PARENTING OUR TEENS

## Therapeutic support for parents of adopted teenagers

### What is Parenting our Teens?

**Parenting our Teens** is a unique three or four day training programme for parents of adopted teenagers run by PAC-UK working with Adoption UK (the optional fourth day covers the topic of self-harm in more depth).

**Parenting our Teens** is peer-led and will help parents and carers of teenagers gain an understanding of their teenagers needs, learn strategies to help their teenager and themselves, and get some valuable peer support.

It is research-based and was developed in response to requests from adoption support teams who have identified a need for a teen-focus programme for their local adoptive parents.

### Who is the programme for?

- This programme is mainly for parents of adopted teens, although it can be run for carers of teenagers who are in other forms of permanence.
- Those who have had children placed for more than six months and are experiencing issues with their teenager but are not in crisis.
- Those who have been assessed as needing a therapeutic parenting support under the Adoption Support Fund (England only).

### How does it work?

- Up to 16 parents can attend.
- It can be run in the week or at weekends.
- It is run by PAC-UK Trainers, who are all adopters, as well as experienced Trainers who bring together other relevant skills and qualifications, such as mental health in young people and family therapy.
- A 'follow on' training day for attendees can form part of the package of support.

### What will parents achieve?

As part of the overall objectives, which will be measured throughout, this themed training programme will help parents and their teens with the following:

- improve parenting and family relations
- improve relationships with teachers and school staff
- improve engagement with learning
- improve emotional regulation
- improve behaviour management
- reduced child on parent violence

### What do parents find most useful about Parenting our Teens - one day training?

*"Invaluable - there is a major gap for such courses for adopted teenagers and their parents..."*

*"After 14 years as an adoptive parent, this is the first time I have attended any course where somebody spoke from experience."*

# PARENTING OUR TEENS

## – four steps to empowering parents of teenagers

### The programme

#### Day one

Day one is designed to support and empower parents in understanding and addressing the emotional and practical impact of adolescence on families. It describes warning signs of issues and includes the following:

- the theories that seek to explain adolescent behaviour, including identity issues
- mental health and emotional/behavioural issues potentially experienced by adopted teenagers
- strategies for staying connected with their children during what can be turbulent times
- how to reduce the risks of harmful behaviour

#### Day two

Day two goes into a little more depth in terms of identity, and raises awareness of the particular issues that teenagers face in their daily lives and provides parents with techniques and strategies to deal with these. Specifically this day will cover:

- raising awareness of social media
- contact with birth parents and the importance of relevant life story work for this age group
- how adopted teens may struggle at school
- ways in which parents can help their children with their education

#### Day three

Day three explores how parenting teens can affect parents. It covers what they can do to build their own resilience and protect themselves in the face of any of the extremes of behaviour displayed by adopted teens. This includes:

- an understanding of secondary trauma and what parent can do to recognize this in themselves or their partner
- what is Child to Parent Violence and how does it affect parents?
- parenting strategies to help parents manage aggression in their adopted teen
- mindfulness and self-care

#### Day four

Day four (optional) covers the topic of self-harm in adopted children in some depth and offers specific strategies and places to go for support. It includes:

- what is self-harm and the prevalence in adopted young people?
- what are the signs of self-harm?
- how to tackle disclosure and get support
- staying safe – how to support your child with their emotional regulation to avoid or reduce their self-harming

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### To find out about pricing or for further information

**Phone:** Corrina Jacob on 01926 852877 or

**Email:** [peertraining@pac-uk.org](mailto:peertraining@pac-uk.org)

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**Prof Helen Minnis, Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in the Institute of Health and Wellbeing at the University of Glasgow:**

*'The programme is very comprehensive and up to date, without "blinding with science". The programme is wonderfully inclusive and supportive, helping adoptive parents feel part of a strong community. The programme gently moves participants towards the more challenging aspects of parenting traumatised children and to broach the very real difficulties this can bring. This is a wonderful resource for new adoptive parents that is likely to help adoptive families flourish.'*



**Sir Richard Bowlby, lecturer, specialising in the work of his father, John Bowlby, the pioneer researcher on early attachment relationships:**

*'I welcome Adoption UK's launch of its parent support programme **Parenting our Children**. At its heart is an intimate knowledge of attachment theory together with the latest research in child development, neuropsychology and therapeutic intervention. I commend Adoption UK and their Family Futures colleagues who have produced this sensitive and intelligent programme for adopters and carers. I wish it every success.'*